

Issue 30 April 2020

News

June Meeting

We hope you are all keeping well and looking after yourselves in these strange times. Unfortunately, due to the social distancing measures currently in place in the UK we have made the decision to cancel the next Data Linkage Service User and Carer Advisory Group meeting in June. The next meeting will be held on **17th September, 4-6pm**.

Take Part

Researchers at King's College London university are appealing to the public for help to assess the mental health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Repeated Assessment of Mental health in Pandemics (RAMP) study aims to measure the mental health and wellbeing of the population throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and examine what factors influence these changes. For more information and details on how to take part, visit the [Maudsley BRC website](#).

Research Spotlight

CRIS in the Time of Coronavirus

The COVID-19 pandemic has placed unprecedented strains on all healthcare sectors and is likely to have wide and unforeseen consequences. These include potentially profound effects on mental health and mental health services. CRIS has an important role to play in helping us understand these effects and improve care. Professor Robert Stewart, academic lead for CRIS, has written a [blog post](#) summarising the work being done using CRIS and the [CRIS team](#) are supporting this work in a number of ways, including:

- Supporting the extraction of CRIS data for approved projects responding to priorities relating to mental healthcare during the pandemic, including supporting the use of existing CRIS linkages with local GP records. This includes projects looking to describe changes in mental health service provision, examine the impact of the lockdown on social-isolation, and identify groups who may be potentially vulnerable.
- Seeking permission for new [data linkages](#) between mental health data from the South London and Maudsley Trust (SLaM) and information on hospital admissions and emergency

care from local acute Trusts, including King's College Hospital Trust (KCH) and Guy's and St Thomas' Trust (GSTT).

- Developing and supporting Natural Language Processing applications to capture information on COVID-19 symptoms, health conditions that may place people at risk, and levels of social isolation, in order to examine the effects that this may have on health and wellbeing.

Natural Language Processing (NLP) is an automatic method for pulling information from free text and structuring it, using NLP means that researchers don't have to read lots of notes to manually find the information they need. For example, if a doctor was to write "I prescribed 500mg of paracetamol" in somebody's notes, the NLP application would be able to structure that into a table:

Drug	Dose
Paracetamol	500mg

Since the lockdown began, CRIS researchers have worked to turn around their research activity and focus on the pandemic and its consequences for people using mental health services. We hope to keep you updated on these projects over the next few newsletters.

Upcoming

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on **Thursday 17th September**, from **4-6pm**, location to be confirmed closer to the time.

Future Newsletters

We are still working remotely so if there is anything that you would like to see in future newsletters or if you would like more information about something mentioned in a newsletter, you can contact us via email: amelia.jewell@slam.nhs.uk / megan.pritchard@kcl.ac.uk.